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returned to Spain. In their stead we welcome Doctor José Pijoán who comes to the same chair in the University of Southern California. His vast knowledge of literature, art, and architecture will, we hope, overflow in interesting lectures for the benefit of our Association.

As these notes are sent in almost at the beginning of the school year, not much can be said of the prospects for the present year except that all our high schools and colleges are crowded as never before. The total school population of the District of Los Angeles has increased from ninety to one hundred fifty thousand in three years. A similar expansion is evident in the entire region so that it has been very hard for boards of education to meet the needs for enlarged equipment, buildings, and teachers. Just one line from some pages of statistics will be suggestive. In the ten largest high schools of the State, there was last year an enrollment of 25,000 pupils and a teaching force of 1200. Of these teachers, 27 taught French and 54 Spanish. Of the pupils, about 3100 were enrolled in French and 8000 in Spanish. In all but two of these schools there are third and fourth year classes in both French and Spanish courses. In the smaller high schools of the State, with enrollments of from 100 to 300 the proportion between pupils in French and Spanish is about one to eight. Even in the schools in which the enrollment runs up to 500, there are very few pupils taking third-year work in modern language.

C. SCOTT WILLIAMS

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Reviews

A *FIRST FRENCH COURSE*. By LOUIS A. ROUX. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1920. 247 pp.+vocab.

Unlike beauty, a French grammar is not "its own excuse for being." The very number of such texts, the competitive element in this as in other fields of modern production, has inevitably created a critical public whose demands for excellence of a high order must be met if a new text is not to have the fate of so many, which launched on the crest of some fashion in language teaching or by skillful advertising sink into disuse when class-room exigencies reveal their less obvious but very real defects. Teachers of French, disillusioned by frequent experiences with unsatisfactory classroom texts and becoming increasingly exacting, demand of a new text that it shall furnish ample justification for its existence before they are willing to try it in and on their classes.

By the way in which it meets the demands of the classroom teacher, whether the latter is an advocate of the direct method or a modified form of that method, "A First French Course" by Louis A. Roux from the Macmillan Press not only amply justifies its existence but gives promise of staying in many class-rooms for a long time to come. Mr. Roux has drawn the material contained in the lessons from his own long and eminently successful classroom experience. Each lesson includes grammatical terminology in both French and English, phonetic transcription, text in French, questionnaire, and exercises for translation from English into French. The subject matter of the French text is unified and accompanied by excellent illustrations which by visualising it serve the double purpose of making the description more alive and of giving the student something (*not English*) on which to concentrate his conversational efforts.

As the Head of a Department in which this book is now being used has phrased it, Mr. Roux's book is proving "most usable."

MARGARET HUDSON

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BRIEF SPANISH GRAMMAR. By M. A. DE VITIS, Fifth Avenue High School, Pittsburgh. Allyn and Bacon. 1922.

La publicación de una gramática española para uso de las escuelas e institutos es siempre un acontecimiento que se recibe con interés de parte de los profesores de español. Una buena gramática siempre tiene buenas oportunidades de popularidad, dada la preeminencia del estudio del español en los planteles de educación del país. Las gramáticas hasta ahora publicadas son más o menos buenas, según que respondan bien o mal a las condiciones de vida y a las necesidades del estudiante. Aun no se ha publicado una gramática que nada deje que desear; por eso, todos esperan la aparición de una mejor que las precedentes. Sin embargo, debe hacerse constar aquí que las que hoy existen cumplen con su obligación con cierta medida de buen éxito; tienen mérito, en verdad, debido a que contienen los puntos esenciales del idioma y asimismo a la explicación más o menos feliz de las partes difíciles de la lengua. Fácil sería escribir una gramática casi perfecta si la formación de clases o la agrupación de estudiantes se hiciera conforme al nivel de las inteligencias y a otros factores no menos importantes; pero la tarea resulta menos fácil cuando esta agrupación, como acontece, se hace principalmente por edades, a falta de un método más exacto. Así es que al juzgar una gramática para uso de educandos hay que tener en cuenta todos estos significantes elementos. Y viene a cuento decir que el oficio de juzgar es uno de los más difíciles que existen.

El libro del Sr. De Vitis, el título del cual libro encabeza estas páginas, posee las características de las buenas gramáticas. Al ex-